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Statement submitted by *Ensemble luttons contre le sida*, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Written statement by the non-governmental organization *Ensemble luttons contre le sida*, submitted in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31

Women are key players in the development process and should be properly positioned in order to expand that development. Our programme, while modest, aims to encourage and strengthen individual and collective initiatives to promote the empowerment of women. The vulnerability of women confers on us a collective responsibility to ensure that the principles of autonomy, dignity and integrity are neither threatened nor violated. We wish to emphasize that *Ensemble luttons contre le sida* advocates on behalf of women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and seeks to create a better future for those women. Women are considered the custodians of cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic identity, they create and give life and they bear future generations of the community; in that context, and with reference to the commitments made under articles 23, 29 and 31 of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we recommend that:

- Projects should be set up to promote the empowerment of adolescent girls and young women, to be implemented through and for increased equality between girls and boys, women and men
- The needs and priorities identified by girls should be taken into account by giving girls a voice and the means to speak out on all topics that concern them, in accordance with their right to participation
- When considering the various issues, a rights-based approach should be used at the individual, socioeconomic and institutional levels, in order to bring about lasting changes in the living conditions and social status of women and girls

To that end, *Ensemble luttons contre le sida* calls for the mobilization of human and financial resources to enable the implementation of our proposals and thus help women escape the vulnerable situations they are in.